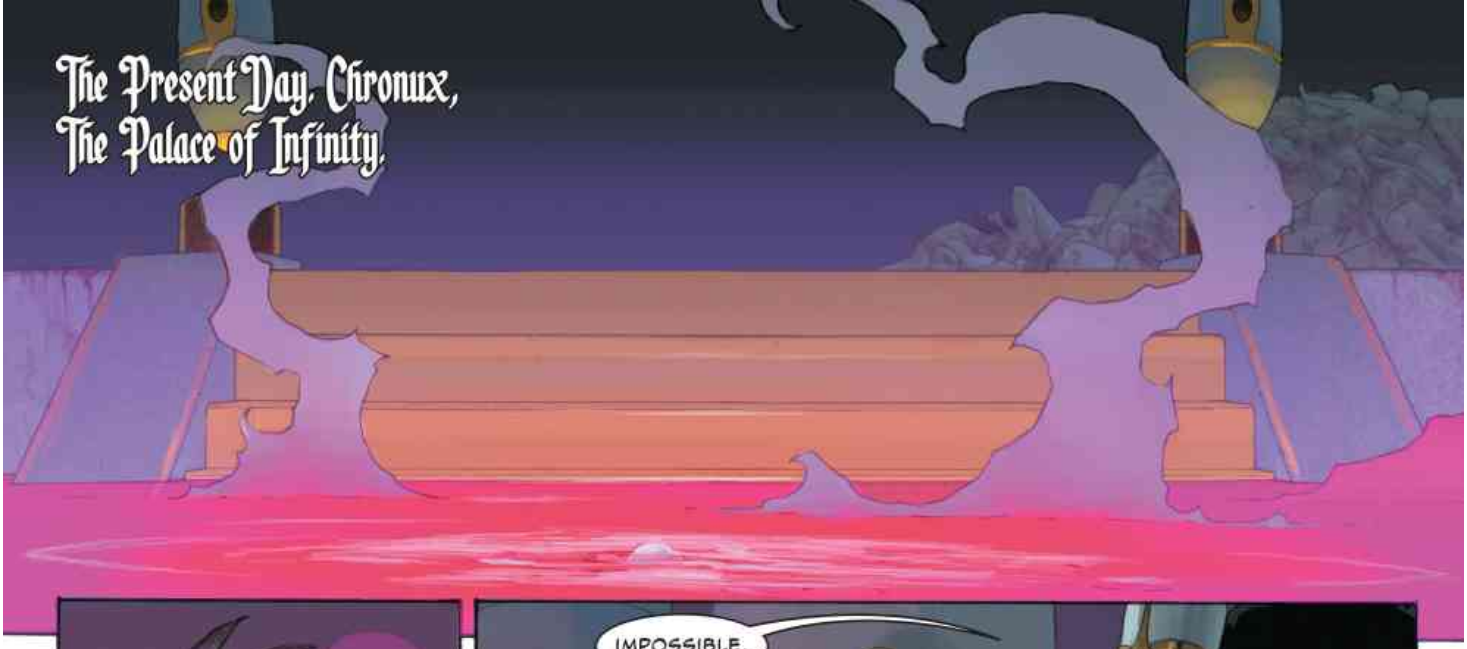
Dream of a Godless Age

The Present Day. Chronux, The Palace of Infinity.
WHERE I COME FROM, WE KNEW NOTHING OF THE WORLD BEYOND WHAT WE COULD SEE WITH OUR OWN EYES.
AND EVEN MUCH OF THAT WE COULD NOT COMPREHEND.
I WAS RAISED TO BELIEVE THAT STARS WERE THE EYES OF OUR ANCESTORS, OF THE ONES WHO'D PLEASED THE GODS AND PROVED WORTHY OF THE SOOTHING EMBRACE OF THE NIGHT.
THE DAMNED SUFFERED FOREVER IN THE SUN. SO THE MORE WHO DIED UNWORTHY, WE WERE TOLD, THE HOTTER OUR WORLD WOULD BURN.
THAT'S HOW WE WERE TAUGHT TO HONOR OUR GODS. THROUGH FEAR.
BUT WHERE WERE THOSE GODS WHENEVER WE NEEDED THEM, I ALWAYS ASKED?
WHERE WERE THE GODS WHEN I NEEDED THEM MOST?
THEY WERE WHERE THEY ALWAYS ARE, ALL THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSE...
THEY WERE NOWHERE TO BE FOUND.

Fourteen Billion Years Ago.
The Void.
I WAS TAUGHT THAT THE UNIVERSE WAS BORN FROM THE TEARS OF THE FIRST GOD, WHEN HE BEHELD THE EMPTINESS AROUND HIM AND HIS HEART WAS FILLED WITH LONELINESS.
THE TEARS BECAME OCEANS, WHICH BECAME ICE, WHICH BECAME WORLDS.
AND THERE THE LONESOME GOD PLANTED THE SEEDS OF ALL LIFE AS WE KNOW IT.
AND THE FIRST GOD LOOKED UPON HIS WORK AND SMILED.

AS I STAND HERE NOW, WITNESSING WITH MY OWN EYES THE FIRST AWKWARD FUMBLINGS OF LIFE IN THE VOID, I SEE NO LONESOME WEEPING GOD.
NO TEARS EXCEPT THOSE SHED BY THE MISSHAPEN CREATURES AROUND ME, MINUTES OLD AND ALREADY BEGGING FOR DEATH.
I SEE NO GRAND PLAN AT WORK. NO BENEVOLENT OMNIPOTENCE ON DISPLAY. I SEE ONLY AN INBRED OFFSPRING OF THE ELDER GODS, TREATING PRIMORDIAL LIFE AS HIS FLESHY PLAYTHING.
BUT DESPITE THE BEST EFFORTS OF THE GODS, I KNOW THAT LIFE WILL STILL FIND A WAY. WORLDS WILL BE BLASTED INTO BEING AND CREATURES WILL SLITHER FROM THE OOZE TO EVOLVE AND THRIVE.
AND ULTIMATELY LEARN TO FEAR AND WORSHIP THE BUMBLING DEITIES THEY ASSUME TO BE THEIR MAKERS.
BUT FOR THIS YOUNG GOD, AT LEAST, THERE WILL BE NO TEMPLES ERECTED.
MY NAME IS GORR, SON OF A NAMELESS FATHER, OUTCAST FROM A FORGOTTEN WORLD.
I HAVE SLAIN MY WAY THROUGH MULTITUDES TO STAND HERE AT THE GENESIS OF ALL THINGS, BLACKENED WITH VENGEANCE, WET WITH HOLY BLOOD, ONE SIMPLE DREAM STILL STRONG IN MY HEART...
...THE DREAM OF A GODLESS AGE.

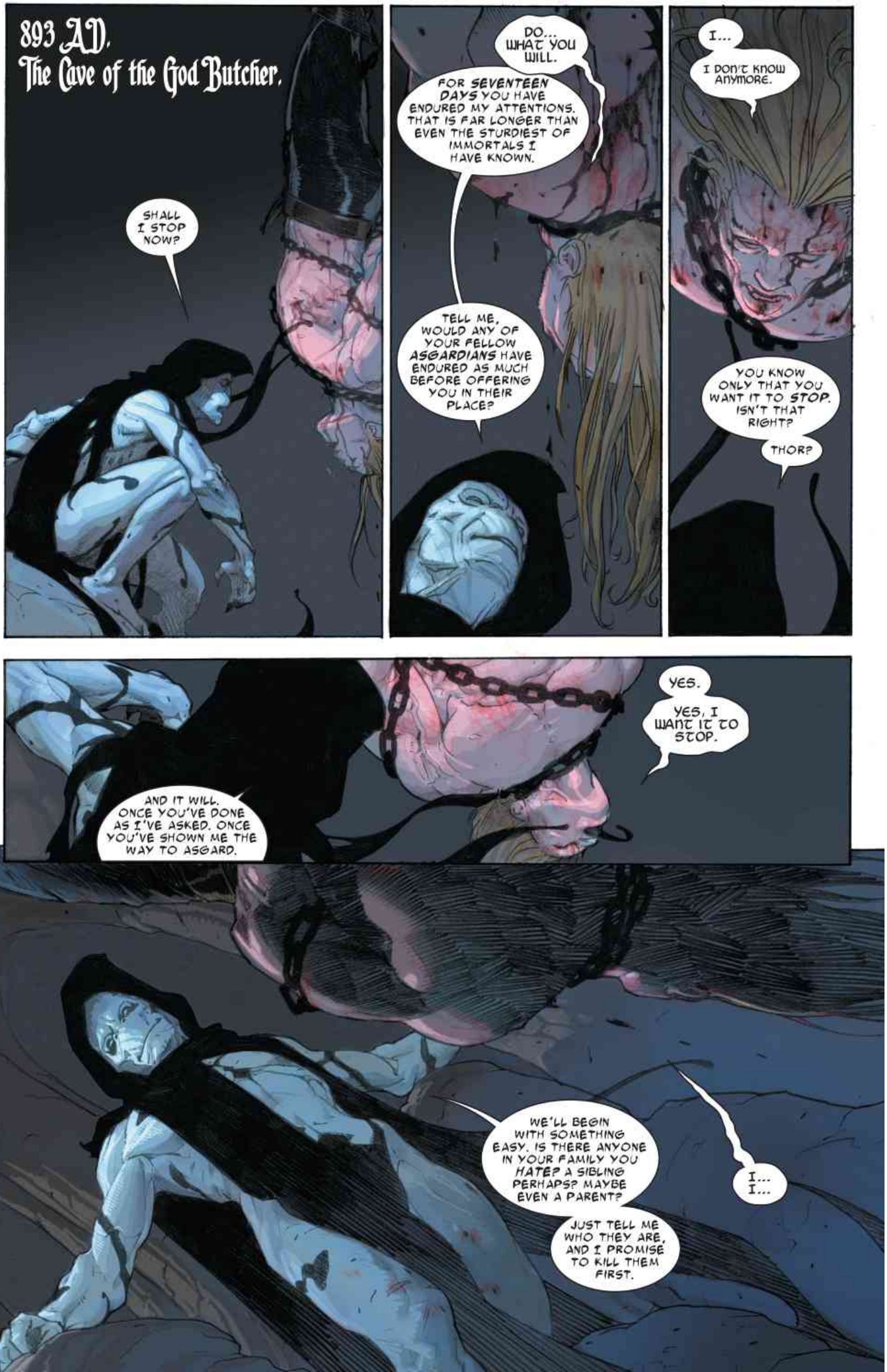

The Present Day. Chronux,
The Palace of Infinity.

IMPOSSIBLE.
SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU, LAST TIME GOD OF CHRONUX, BUT GORR YET LIVES.

AND HE HAS CLAIMED HIS PRIZE.
BY THE STARS OF ALL THE HEAVENS, IS THAT...
THE STILL WARM HEART OF AN ELDER GOD, YES.
NOW ALL I NEED IS A MOON OR TWO, SOME CENTURIES TO MYSELF AND THE SPACE IN WHICH TO BUILD.
AR

AND SLAVES. SO VERY MANY SLAVES.
RUMBLE

BUTCHER OF GODS!
GUH
PREPARE TO KNOW THE WRATH OF THOR!


893 AD.
The Cave of the God Butcher.
SHALL I STOP NOW?
DO... WHAT YOU WILL.
FOR SEVENTEEN DAYS YOU HAVE ENDURED MY ATTENTIONS. THAT IS FAR LONGER THAN EVEN THE STURDIEST OF IMMORTALS I HAVE KNOWN.
TELL ME, WOULD ANY OF YOUR FELLOW ASGARDIANS HAVE ENDURED AS MUCH BEFORE OFFERING YOU IN THEIR PLACE?
I...
I DON'T KNOW ANYMORE.
YOU KNOW ONLY THAT YOU WANT IT TO STOP. ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
THOR?
YES.
YES, I WANT IT TO STOP.
AND IT WILL. ONCE YOU'VE DONE AS I'VE ASKED. ONCE YOU'VE SHOWN ME THE WAY TO ASGARD.
WE'LL BEGIN WITH SOMETHING EASY. IS THERE ANYONE IN YOUR FAMILY YOU HATE? A SIBLING PERHAPS? MAYBE EVEN A PARENT?
JUST TELL ME WHO THEY ARE, AND I PROMISE TO KILL THEM FIRST.
I... I...

IN HERE! WE'VE FOUND HIM!
WHO DARES?!
REDDEN YOUR SPEARS, BERSERKERS! LET FLY YOUR RAGING HANDS! RATHER A THOUSAND DEATHS THAN ONE RETREAT!
THIS NIGHT WE FEAST IN VALHALLA!
THIS NIGHT WE DIE FOR THOR!

GORR! HAVE AT THEE, COWARD!
NO MORE HIDING BEHIND THESE EMPTY HUSKS! MJOLNIR GROWS WEARY OF BLUDGEONING THEM!
TODAY THE BLOOD THAT FLIES WILL BE YOURS! AND THE TEARS! AND THE TEETH!
SHING
HOW LOVELY. I SEE YOU'VE GROWN UP NICELY SINCE LAST WE MET.
AND MY BLACK BERSERKERS ARE FAR FROM EMPTY HUSKS, GOD OF THUNDER. THEY ARE A PART OF ME. THANKS IN NO SMALL MEASURE TO YOU.
DAMN YOUR DEVILRY! FIGHT LIKE A GOD!
THOUGH THEY DO STILL HAVE A MIND OF THEIR OWN. THE ONES WHO ATTACKED YOU AT THE HALLS OF ALL-KNOWING, FOR INSTANCE. I DID NOT SEND THEM. NOT CONSCIOUSLY, AT LEAST.
THOUGH PERHAPS DEEP DOWN INSIDE, SOME PART OF ME WANTED YOU HERE, THOR, PRINCE OF ASGARD... THOR, THE GOD WHO GOT AWAY...
WANTED YOU HERE TO BEAR WITNESS AS I BEGIN THE NEXT PHASE OF MY MISSION. AFTER ALL...

"NONE OF THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT YOU."
STOP THIS! I AM NOT HERE TO HURT YOU, MEN OF EARTH! I COME INSTEAD TO LIBERATE YOU AND YOUR KIND FROM THE YOKE OF DIVINE SERVITUDE!
AND WE COME TO LIBERATE THAT HIDEOUS HEAD OF YOURS FROM ITS SHOULDERS! CUT HIM DOWN!
DON'T WORRY, LORD THOR, WE'LL HAVE YOU FREE OF THESE CHAINS OR DIE TRY--
LISTEN TO ME, YOU FOOLS! DO NOT THROW YOUR LIVES AWAY ON SOMETHING AS USELESS AS A GOD!
GAAHHHK!!!
HE ISN'T WORTH YOUR DEVOTION! NONE OF THEM ARE! JUST LISTEN TO ME! LISTEN AND LET ME TELL YOU OF MY DREAM! A DREAM OF A--
FOR THE LOVE OF ODIN, SOMEONE GET A SPEAR IN THAT THROAT AND STOP THIS WRETCH'S MEWLING!
VERY WELL. DIE FOR YOUR GOD IF YOU WISH. SEE IF HE EVEN TAKES NOTICE.
AAAAARRGGHHH!!!

RRRRGGH!!! YOUR PUPPETS FALL, GORR! YOU WILL ANSWER TO THE FURY OF MY HAMMER!
I DO!
BOFF
THOSE VIKINGS OF YOURS FOUGHT LIKE DEVILS THAT DAY IN THE CAVE. DO YOU EVEN REMEMBER THEIR FACES?
"OF COURSE, I'D SEEN MEN WILLING TO DIE FOR THEIR GODS BEFORE. ON MORE WORLDS THAN I CAN COUNT. BUT NEVER WITH SUCH...SUCH WICKED GLEE."
FOR ASGARD!!! GAAAARRGGHHH!!!
YOUR VIKINGS TAUGHT ME TWO IMPORTANT LESSONS THAT DAY, THOR. ONE, THAT MORTALS' CHILDLIKE FEAR OF A GODLESS WORLD IS FAR STRONGER THAN THEIR FEAR OF DEATH, NO MATTER HOW PAINFUL. AND TWO...
"NO MATTER HOW FIERCE MY DEVOTION OR HOW INVINCIBLE MY WEAPON MIGHT MAKE ME, NO MATTER HOW JUST MY CAUSE..."
I COULD NO LONGER DO MY JOB ALONE.

KRRRAK
RRRRRRRGH!!!

I WALKED THE COSMOS FOR TWO THOUSAND YEARS, KILLING GOD AFTER GOD WITH THESE VERY HANDS. I TORTURED THEM AND SKINNED THEM AND BURNED THEM ALIVE AND LEFT THEM ROTTING IN THEIR HEAVENS.
I MADE NO PROCLAMATIONS. I ISSUED NO THREATS OR DEMANDS. I SIMPLY KILLED EVERY IMMORTAL TYRANT I COULD FIND. AND THEN MOVED ON THROUGH THE SHADOWS.
BUT YOU BROUGHT ME OUT OF THE DARKNESS, THOR. YOU SHOWED ME A WHOLE NEW WAY. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE HISTORY OF THE COSMOS...

"A GOD DID SOMETHING USEFUL."

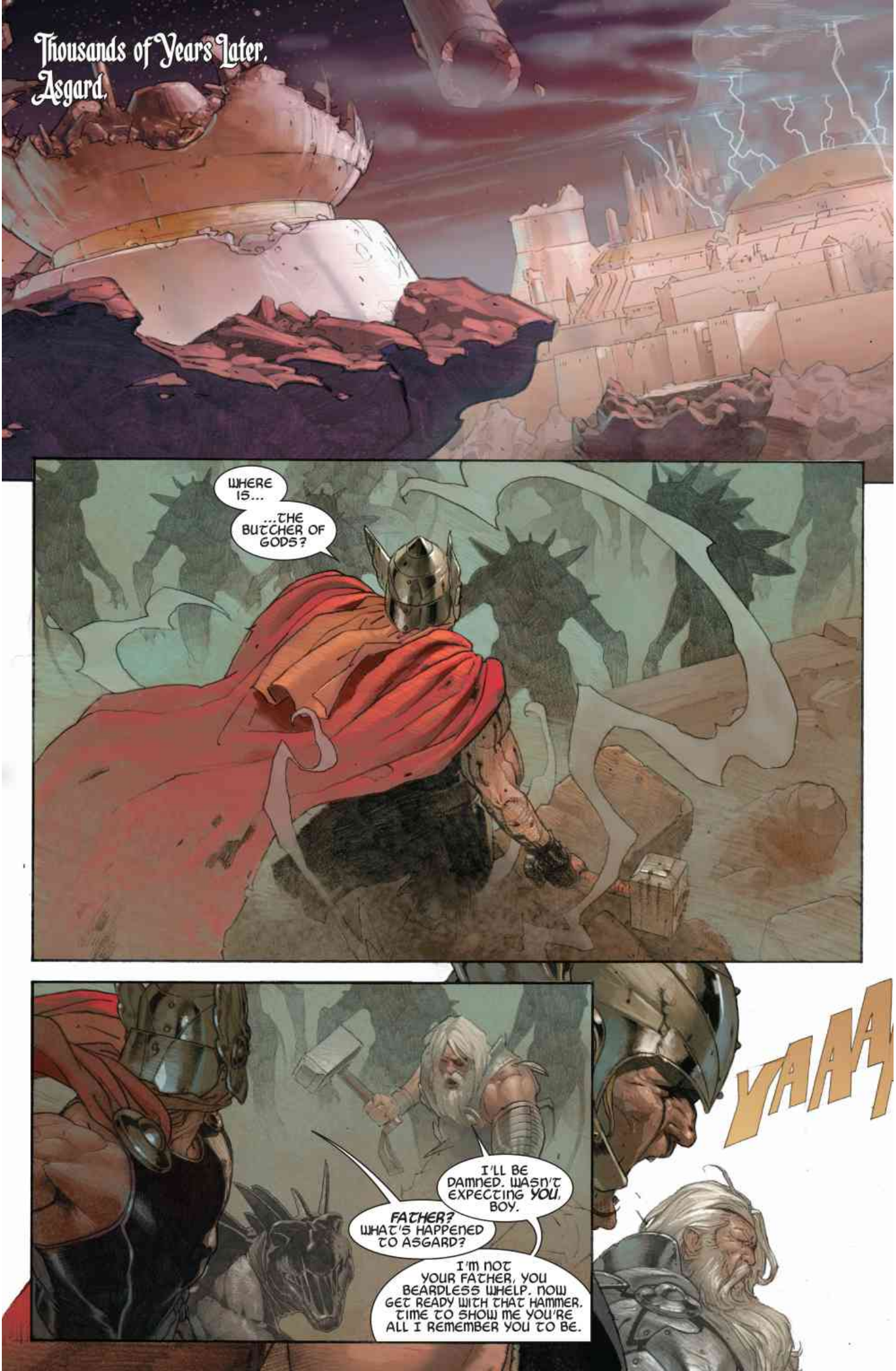
TELL ME, AS YOU DIE, MEN OF EARTH, DO YOU AT LAST SEE THE TRUTH?
WHERE ARE YOUR GODS NOW? WHERE ARE THE GREAT LIES YOU WASTED YOUR LIVES WORSHIPPING? WHERE IS YOUR SAVIOR? WHERE IS...
...THOR?

YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE KILLING ME THAT DAY IN THE CAVE. BUT INSTEAD, YOU SAVED ME. YOU SAVED ME FROM A LIFE OF FAILURE. YOU SAVED MY DREAM.
AND FOR THAT, I WILL FOREVER BE INDEBTED TO YOU, THOR OF ASGARD.
THAT IS WHY YOU DIE LAST.

IS IT DONE?
I'VE PROGRAMMED THE TIME POOL AS YOU ASKED. NOW PLEASE, YOU PROMISED YOU'D LET ME LIVE.
NO. I ONLY PROMISED THAT UNLIKE THE GOD OF THUNDER HERE...
HHUURGH
...YOU WOULD NOT HAVE TO WATCH UNTIL THE END.
NO!!! I SWEAR BY THE SPIRES OF ASGARD, NO MORE GODS WILL DIE!
YOU'RE NOT LISTENING, ARE YOU, THOR? ALL GODS WILL DIE. FROM THE FIRST UNTIL THE LAST. NO ALMIGHTY GETS OUT ALIVE. I GO NOW TO MAKE IT SO.
BUILDING MYSELF AN ARMY WAS JUST THE BEGINNING. WITH THESE NEXT STEPS...
I GO TO EXPLORE NEW HORIZONS OF DEICIDE.

DIE, YOU BLACK-HEARTED BASTARD!
HUHRRRRRRGHH!!!
NO! I REFUSE TO DIE!
I REFUSE TO DIE WHILE GODS YET LIVE! I--
KA BOOOOOM!!!
GOODBYE, THOR. PLEASE DO STAY ALIVE FOR A VERY LONG TIME.
I WOULD BE SO TERRIBLY DISAPPOINTED IF WE DID NOT MEET AGAIN.
NO!!!

GORR! YOU WILL NOT ESCAPE ME AGAIN!
NO UNIVERSE IS BIG ENOUGH TO HIDE YOU FROM THOR!
KRAAB


Thousands of Years Later.
Asgard.
WHERE IS...
...THE BUTCHER OF GODS?
I'LL BE DAMNED. WASN'T EXPECTING YOU, BOY.
FATHER? WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ASGARD?
I'M NOT YOUR FATHER, YOU BEARDLESS WHELP. NOW GET READY WITH THAT HAMMER. TIME TO SHOW ME YOU'RE ALL I REMEMBER YOU TO BE.
YAAA

HE'S DEAD.

THOR HAS SLAIN THE GOD BUTCHER! ALL HAIL THE ODINSON!
BY THE EYES OF HEIMDALL, WHAT A CUT! THAT AXE BLOW WOULD HAVE FELLED THE WORLD TREE ITSELF!
OH, THE SONGS THAT WILL BE SUNG OF THIS DAY. THE TALES THAT WILL BE TOLD FOR GENERATIONS TO CO--
NO!

WE WILL NEVER SPEAK OF THIS DAY AGAIN, DO YOU HEAR ME? NEVER!

"FOR AS LONG AS WE SHALL LIVE."

THEY'RE DISSOLVING. HE'S PULLING THEM BACK.
BLESS MY EYE, WE MAY HAVE ACTUALLY WON.

THE GOD BUTCHER? WHERE IS HE? I WAS RIGHT BEHIND HIM.
RIGHT BEHIND HIM? YOU'RE EVEN DUMBER THAN I REMEMBER, AREN'T YOU?
YOU APPEARED IN THE EXACT SAME SPOT HE DID, I'LL GIVE YOU THAT. BUT YOU'RE A BIT LATE, BOY.

THE GOD BUTCHER HAS BEEN HERE FOR 900 YEARS.

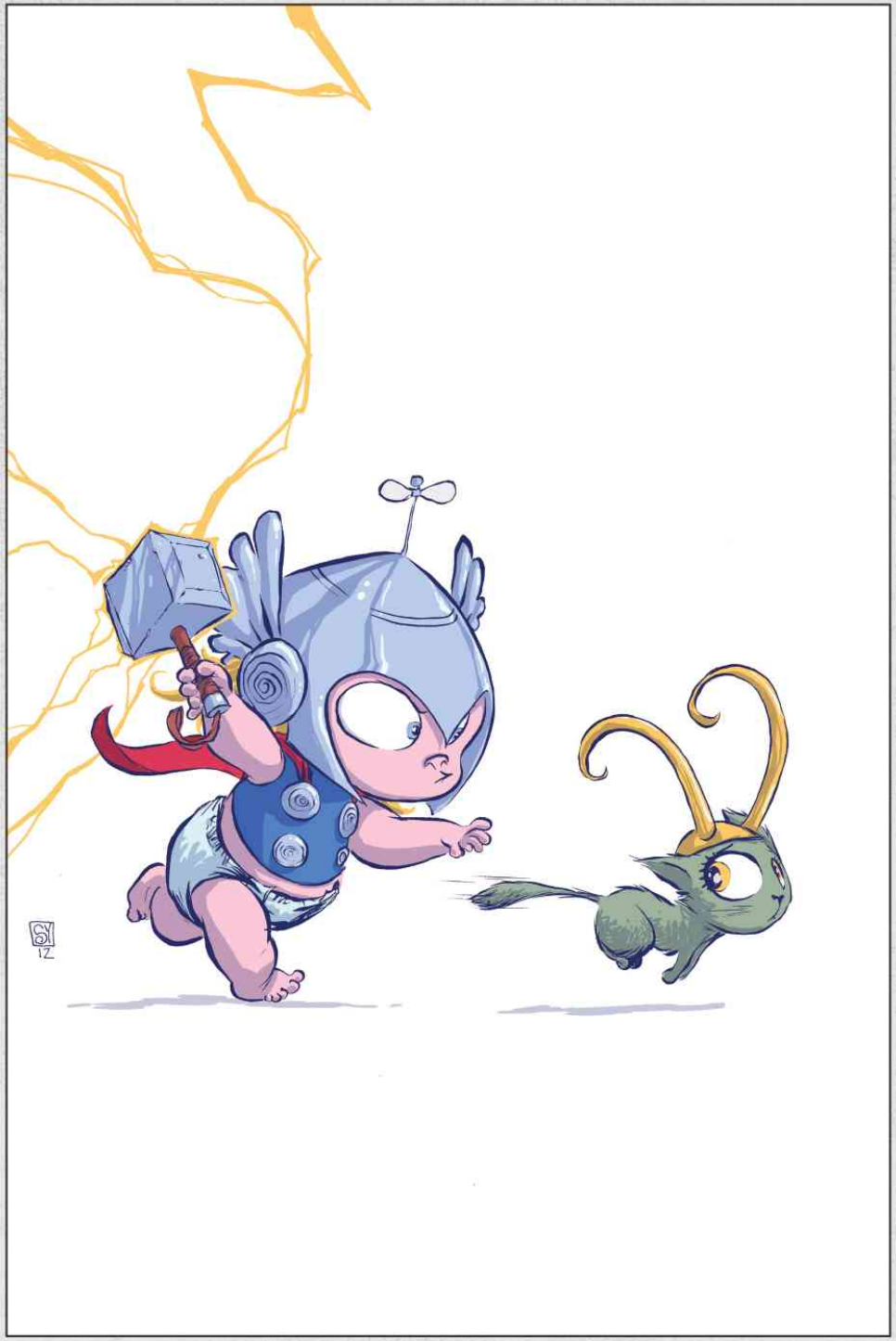
"AND HE'S BEEN BUSY."
HMMM.
ANOTHER THOR. HOW SPLENDID. ONE CAN NEVER HAVE TOO MANY OF THOSE.
AND JUST IN TIME, AS WELL.
I SAID I WOULD SAVE YOU FOR LAST, GOD OF THUNDER, AND THAT DAY IS IMMINENT.
THE FIRST DAY OF A NEW AGE OF FREEDOM.

"THE DAY ALL MY DREAMS COME TRUE."
Next: The Origin of Gorr!
AR

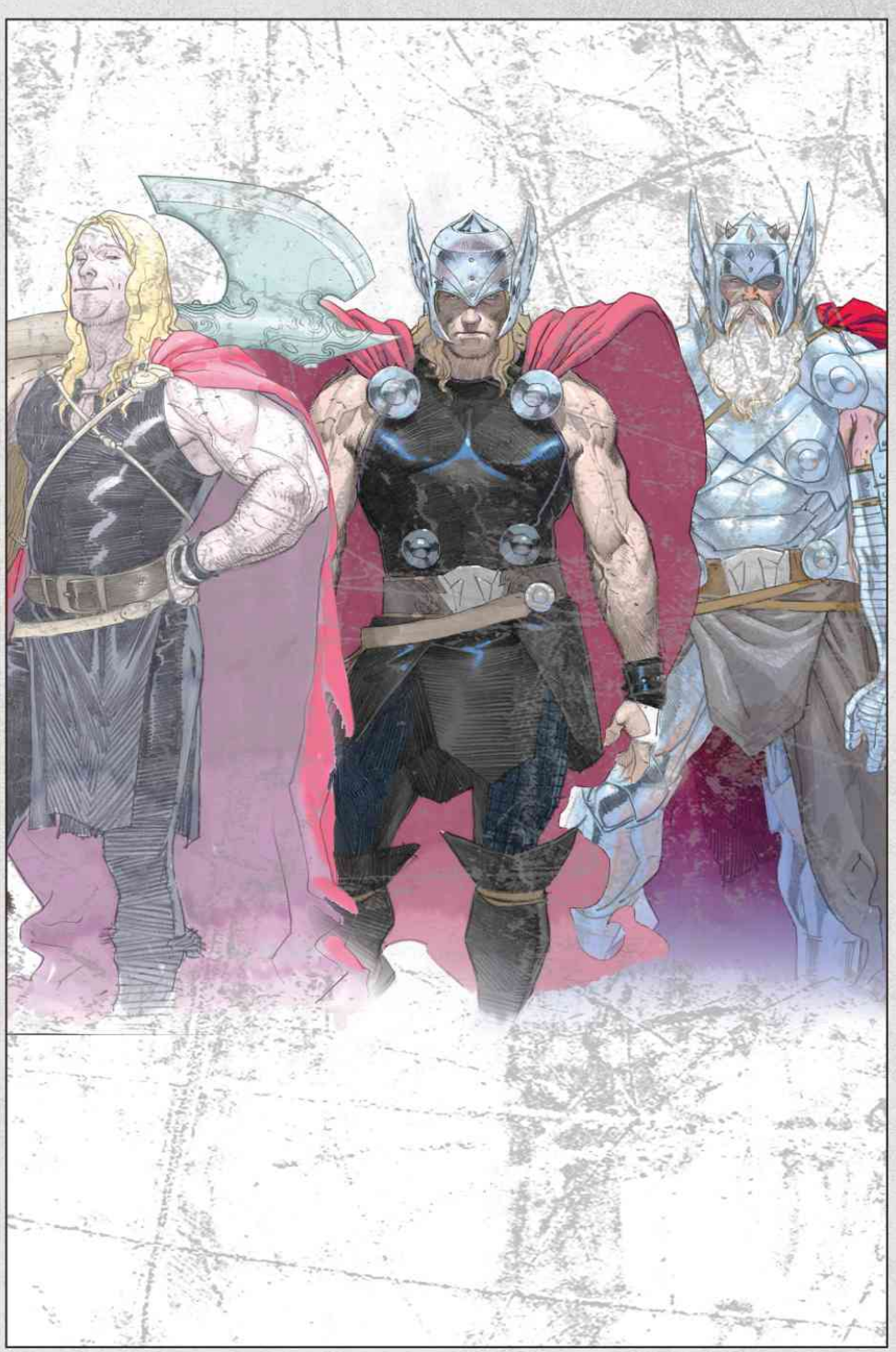
#1-2 COMBINED COVERS BY ESAD RIBIC

#1 SKETCH VARIANT
BY JOE QUESADA & DANNY MIKI

#1 VARIANT
BY JOE QUESADA, DANNY MIKI & RICHARD ISANOVE



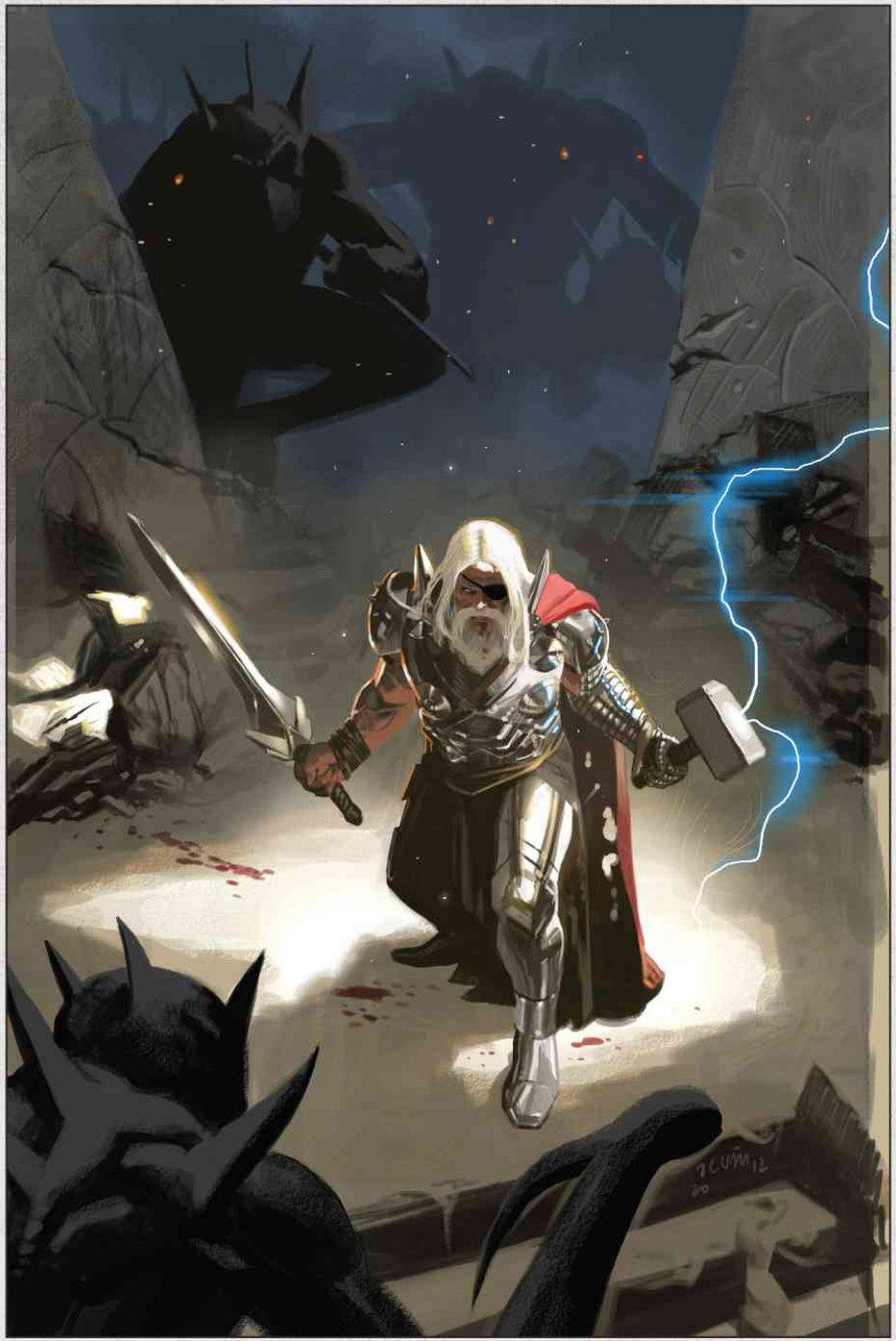
#1 VARIANT
BY SKOTTIE YOUNG



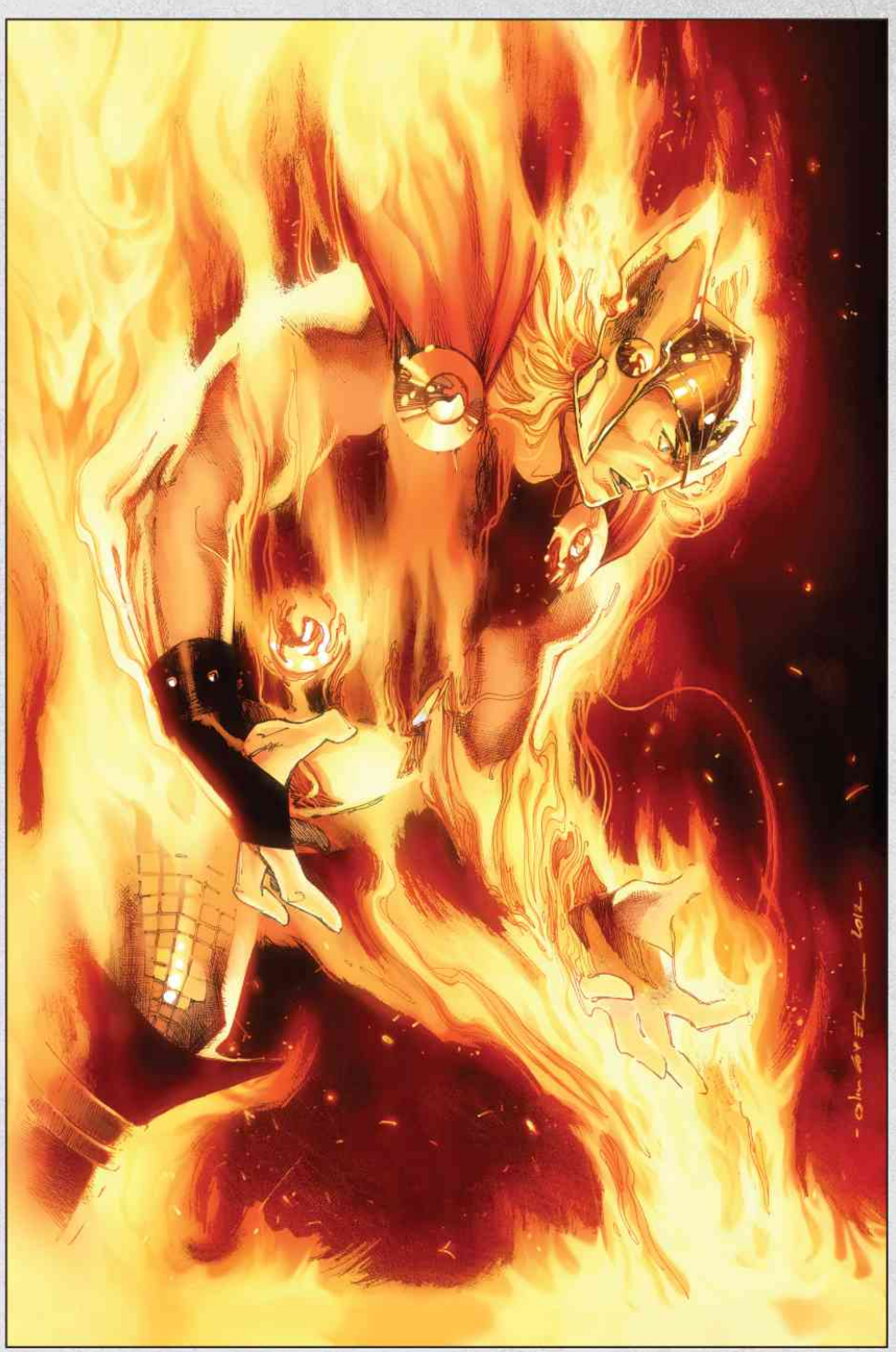
#1 DESIGN VARIANT
BY ESAD RIBIC

#1 VARIANT
BY DANIEL ACUÑA

#2 VARIANT
BY DANIEL ACUÑA



#3 VARIANT
BY DANIEL ACUÑA



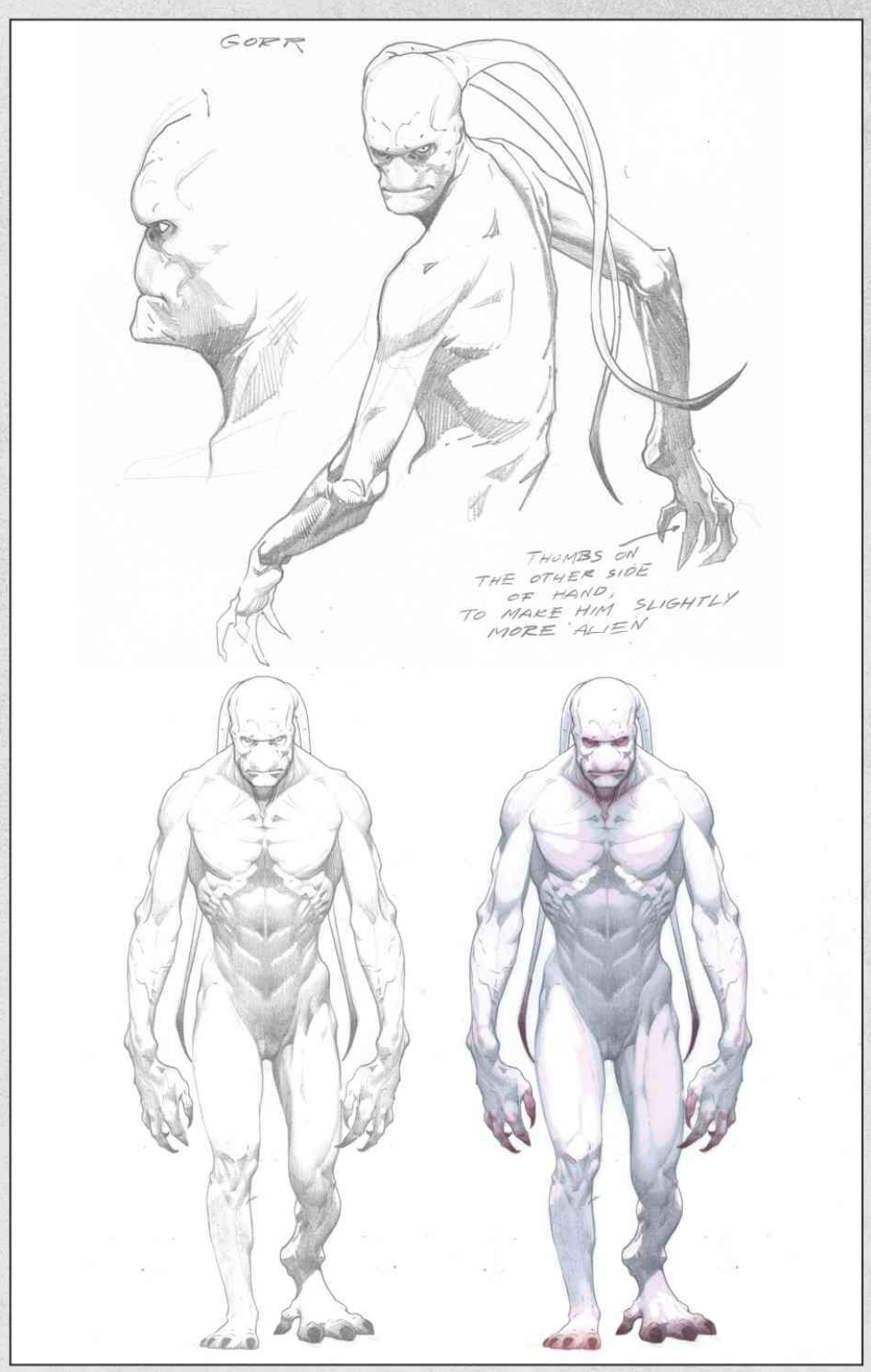
#4 VARIANT
BY OLIVIER COIPEL & LAURA MARTIN

#5 VARIANT
BY R.M. GUÉRA

Esad Ribic Sketchbook

POLAR WOLF'S FUR!
ROPE CAPE HOLDER
SAME BELT FOR BOTH POSITIONS
AXE HOLDER
EROL: FLYNN ATTITUDE
YOUNG THOR

CROWN.


GORR
THUMBS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF HAND, TO MAKE HIM SLIGHTLY MORE 'ALIEN

COVER SKETCHES

#2, PAGE 9 PENCILS

#2, PAGE 10 PENCILS

#2, PAGE 11 PENCILS

#2, PAGE 12 PENCILS

#2, PAGE 13 PENCILS

#2, PAGE 14 PENCILS

#2, PAGE 15 PENCILS

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Throughout the ages, gods have been vanishing, their mortal worshipers left in chaos. The only hope for these ravaged worlds is for Thor to unravel the gruesome mystery of the God Butcher! In the distant past, the Thunder God discovers a forgotten cave that echoes with the cries of tortured gods — and is shocked to find himself among them! In the present, Thor follows the bloody wake of murdered gods across the depths of space. And thousands of years from now, the last god-king of a ruined Asgard makes his final stand against the God Butcher's berserker legions. As three Thors from three eras race to stop the God Butcher, the full extent of his vicious scheme takes terrifying shape!

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